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A study on the “*shishi* 石室” poems  
——A Comparison between the landscape poems  
written by Xie Ling-yun 謝靈運 and Bao Zhao 鮑照——

Yoshiko DÔZONO, Kyôto University

Xie Ling-yun and Bao Zhao are the representative poets of the *Song* 宋 period in the Southern Dynasties. Xie Ling-yun is noted as a *shanshuishi* 山水詩 writer, while Bao Zhao is noted as a *yuefu* 樂府 writer. Their poetry has been considered as differing in essentials, though Bao Zhao had also written some landscape poems under the influence of Xie Ling-yun.

In their landscape poems, there is one in which “*shishi*” was described. “*Shishi*” means “rock chamber”, which are caves in deep mountains where Daoists or *Shenxian* 神仙 (divine transcendents) dwelt. In the *Jin* 晉 and *Song* period, these chambers were regarded as mysterious zones which may possibly lead to the *Shenxian* world or *Dongtian* 洞天 (grotto heaven). The “*shishi*” poems indicate one type of landscape poem current at that time, which aimed at describing a religious experience. In this paper, I consider the originality of their landscape poems by analyzing the “*shishi*” poems.

Xie Ling-yun’s poem “*Shishishan shi* 石室山詩” expresses mainly how full

of divine beauty and purity the cave was. He affirms here that nobody but him would be able to find the holy place, and says that the sight of the place he visited for the first time mysteriously resembled that image of the *Shenxian* world, which he had formed in his mind from long adoration. Such a religious experience, where in an image in his mind harmonizes with the real sight, is also described in the prose poem “*Luofushan fu* 羅浮山賦” and the poem “*Deng jiangzhong guyu shi* 登江中孤嶼詩”. This impression, derived from his own experience with nature, is considered unique to him.

Bao Zhao's poem “*Cong Yu-zhonglang you Yuanshan shishi shi* 從庾中郎遊園山石室詩” expresses mainly a dark and mysterious atmosphere within the “*shishi*” he visited with *Yu-zhonglang*. He compares the inside of it to *Dongtian* studded with mysterious stones, while on the other hand, describing the absolute silence and darkness, along with his awe for the area. In this era, “*shishi*” had been chiefly equated with an image of purity, likened to a Utopia. His poem, as though it represents a rooted sense of fear that people had harbored for caves from ancient times, is very unique, forming a striking contrast to Xie Ling-yun's “*shishi*” poem.

## ‘Liang zhou ci (涼州詞)’ and ‘Liang zhou qu (涼州曲)’

### Domestication of borderland music in the Tang dynasty

Junko NAKA, Tenri University

In this article, I aimed to study the music of Liang zhou (涼州) described in the poetry during the Tang dynasty. The changes of the description of borderland music should reflect the relationship between Tang dynasty and Tu fan (吐蕃).

The ‘Liang zhou ci (涼州詞)’ described in the high Tang period differ from that of the middle Tang. The ‘Liang zhou ci (涼州詞)’ in the high Tang was described in the traditional way, such as yue fu of the Southern Dynasties Period. But, since the middle Tang, the poets began to use ‘Liang zhou ci (涼州詞)’ to describe the real circumstances of Liang zhou.

On the other hand, ‘Liang zhou qu (涼州曲)’ descended from Liang zhou in the Kai yuan (開元) period was spread among the Chinese people. After the Tian bao (天寶) period, ‘Liang zhou qu (涼州曲)’ came to be considered

Chinese music. For instance, the pitch of 'Liang zhou qu (涼州曲)' was changed by musicians in the Tang dynasty. Moreover, stories about the Emperor Xuan zong (玄宗) were added. 'Liang zhou qu (涼州曲)' was appreciated as a traditional Chinese music. Especially, since the middle Tang, 'Liang zhou qu (涼州曲)' had another name 'Liang zhou qu (梁州曲)'. It proves that a marginal music took root among the Chinese people.

### The Idea of Calligraphic Scripts in Zhang Huai-guan 張懷瓘's *Shu-duan* 書斷

NARITA Kentarô, Kyôto University

Zhang Huai-guan 張懷瓘 is a major calligraphic critic of the Tang 唐 era, and *Shu-duan* 書斷 is his most important work. In this work, he divides a large number of past calligraphers into three grades. Although this method is derived from Yu Jian-wu 庾肩吾's *Shu-pin* 書品 and Li Si-zhen 李嗣真's *Shu-hou-pin* 書後品, he adds a new factor in order to facilitate a more accurate evaluation, namely to place each calligrapher into multiple grades according to scripts. In order to define this new factor, he describes the histories and characteristics of ten scripts. This paper aims at investigating how these ten scripts were chosen and arranged by Zhang Huai-guan, and how his unique idea of scripts improved his criticism.

These ten scripts can be classified roughly into two groups. One can be named *zhuan* 篆 group, which includes *gu-wen* 古文, *da-zhuan* 大篆, *zhou-wen* 籀文, *xiao-zhuan* 小篆, *ba-fen* 八分 and *fei-bai* 飛白. The other can be named *cao-li* 草隸 group, which includes *li-shu* 隸書, *zhang-cao* 章草, *xing-shu* 行書 and *cao-shu* 草書. This paper attempts to investigate pairs of categories, such as archaic simplicity and modern refinement, as well as static and dynamic, which help us to grasp Zhang Huai-guan's idea about the history of each group. *Zhuan* group passes from static to dynamic as it changes from archaic simplicity to modern refinement. In contrast to the *zhuan* group, the *cao-li* group starts with archaic simplicity which is dynamic, and gradually gains other various merits before being perfected by Wang Xi-zhi 王羲之. Generally speaking, Zhang Huai-guan's idea functions well when analyzing the *zhuan* group, while it cannot explain all the merits of the *cao-li* group, which merits

differ from calligrapher to calligrapher. That is because he tried to explain the views regarding *cao-li* calligraphers accumulated before him in light of contemporary concept of scripts. This is the limitation of his idea.

This paper is of some value, for there have been few readers who have regarded the idea of scripts found in *Shu-duan* as a means of evaluating calligraphers, and have tried to reveal its total structure and intention.

## Spectacle of Man-yi 蠻夷 Recognition of different culture in mid-Tang 中唐

Satoshi YOSHIKAWA, Kyôto University

All literati who represent the mid-Tang, Han Yu 韓愈, Liu Zong-yuan 柳宗元, Liu Yu-xi 劉禹錫, Bai Ju-yi 白居易, and Yuan Zhen 元稹, had been relegated to the Man-yi (different ethnic groups in the south) region. It is a new characteristic of their poetry to minutely describe the peculiar climate, ecology, and customs found only in the Man-yi region. Such peculiar nature and customs had been almost wholly disregarded before high-Tang 盛唐, but with the coming of mid-Tang, starting with Han Yu who had been relegated to Yang-shan 陽山, each literati actively describes these in long poems that explain their own circumstance, from the past to present.

The description of scenery and expression of feeling are also respectively different. Roughly speaking, Han Yu and Liu Zong-yuan dislike and reject nature and the customs in these different regions. On the other hand, as for Liu Yu-xi, Bai Ju-yi and Yuan Zhen, their curiosity towards the different region exceeds their contempt. Moreover, they are interested in the industry and culture.

Having laid out these poems in chronological order, from Han Yu poems to Bai Ju-yi and Yuan Zhen poems, there is an obvious tendency towards a decrease of contempt. In the poetry compassed during such relegation, it was conventional to express one's sorrow. However, their poetry of mid-Tang could not be contained within this convention. It is a new type of expression of feeling to describe interest, while at the same time admitting the value of peculiar nature and customs unique to the Man-yi culture, which in turn leads to a recognition of one's own value. Such a change in recognition towards the

Man-yi culture plays a major role when the relegated literati were in the process of overcoming their sorrow. Moreover, this style of expression adopted by the literati of the Song dynasty.

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